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## HIGH SCHOOLS IN OHIO PRIOR TO 1850

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The beginnings of the public high-school movement in Ohio occur in the decade from 1840 to 1850. Prior to this time all secondary education had been carried on in private chartered academies, though the name "institute" and "seminary" also appear, and from 1830 forward a number of these private institutions were chartered as high schools. These latter institutions were not, however, a part of the public-school system, but were in their organization and function schools of the academy type.

The early settlers of Ohio were firm believers in the necessity of affording their children educational opportunities, and in the forty-seven years from 1803 (when Ohio was admitted to statehood) to 1850, the number of private secondary schools chartered by the general assembly was 172. The numbers chartered in the different decades and the frequency with which the different names (academy, institute, seminary, high school) were used are shown in the following table:<sup>1</sup>

Academies—	1803–1810.....	4
	1811–1820.....	8
	1821–1830.....	10
	1831–1840.....	44
	1841–1850.....	27
		—
		93
Seminaries—	1803–1810.....	1
	1811–1820.....	1
	1821–1830.....	0
	1831–1840.....	20
	1841–1850.....	10
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<sup>1</sup> E. A. MILLER, "The History of Educational Legislation in Ohio from 1803 to 1850," *Supplementary Educational Monographs*, Vol. III, No. 2. Chicago: Department of Education, University of Chicago (1920), 77.

Institutes—	1803–1830.....	0
	1831–1840.....	13
	1841–1850.....	17
		—
		30
High Schools—	1803–1820.....	0
	1821–1830.....	1
	1831–1840.....	8
	1841–1850.....	5
		—
		14
Boarding School.....		1
Universal School.....		1
Independent School.....		1
		—
		3
Total.....		172

Schools of this type were common in all settled parts of the state, but were especially numerous on the Western Reserve.

The public-school system of Ohio in its early years was a system of common schools of the district type; there was no recognition on the part of the state of any obligation to organize or finance in any way secondary education. This need *was* recognized however by Samuel Lewis, Ohio's great educational leader and state superintendent of common schools from 1837 to 1840. In his annual report of 1838 Mr. Lewis says:

There are some townships that have the means and the desire of establishing central township schools or academies, and in most of our townships the youth over twelve years of age could with convenience attend such a school. The number of townships now prepared for this measure is small, but will be increasing. I recommend, therefore, a provision giving the whole number of directors in the township authority to establish such a school, and assess upon the township such sum of money as may be required for that purpose, and to this end they should from their own number appoint a board of five, who should for the time being control such central school.

The mere passage of the law could do no harm to those townships who would refuse to avail themselves of its provisions, and would give to those desiring the privilege, the right to exercise it.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ohio Documents, 37th G.A., Doc. 32, p. 28.

There was no resulting action on the part of the legislature and it remained for individual communities to take the initiative in establishing and legalizing schools of this type.

The name "high school" first appears in Ohio legislation in the charter granted to The High School of Elyria, February 22, 1830,<sup>1</sup> nine years after the establishment of the first of America's high schools in Boston. This charter was granted to Heman Ely (one of the founders of Elyria) and four associates, under the name of The High School of Elyria.

Nearly a year later, on January 15, 1831,<sup>2</sup> the Woodward High School of Cincinnati was chartered. This school had been previously chartered in 1827<sup>3</sup> as the "Woodward Free Grammar School" to provide for the "better instruction of the poor children living in the said city in the rudiments of an English education." It is evident that its earlier plan did not contemplate work of secondary-school grade and that the Elyria high school was the first institution in the Northwest Territory to assume the name "high school" with full legal warrant.

	Date of Charter
The Springfield High School <sup>4</sup> .....	March 1, 1834
The Ohio Conference High School <sup>5</sup> .....	March 7, 1842
(This does not represent the chartering of a new school but the passing of the control of the Springfield High School to the Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.)	
Kingsville High School <sup>6</sup> .....	February 12, 1835
Middleberg High School <sup>7</sup> .....	December 30, 1836
Akron High School <sup>8</sup> .....	February 5, 1838
Bigelow High School, Xenia <sup>9</sup> .....	January 5, 1839
Meigs County High School and Teachers Institute <sup>10</sup> .....	March 16, 1839
Streetsborough High School <sup>11</sup> .....	March 12, 1840
Bath High School <sup>12</sup> .....	March 7, 1842
Normal High School, Carroll County <sup>13</sup> .....	March 8, 1845
Cadiz High School <sup>14</sup> .....	March 9, 1849
Vinton High School <sup>15</sup> .....	March 21, 1850
Hartford High School <sup>16</sup> .....	March 23, 1850

<sup>1</sup> O.L., XXVIII, 116.

<sup>16</sup> O.L., XLVIII, 636.

<sup>4</sup> O.L., XXXII, 270.

<sup>2</sup> O.L., XXIX, 43:

<sup>5</sup> O.L., XL, 114.

<sup>3</sup> O.L., XXV, 62.

<sup>6</sup> O.L., XXXIII, 48.

<sup>9</sup> O.L., XXXVII, 6.

<sup>7</sup> O.L., XXXIV, 20.

<sup>10</sup> O.L., XXXVII, 257.

<sup>8</sup> O.L., XXXVI, 52.

<sup>11</sup> O.L., XXXVIII, 127

<sup>14</sup> O.L., XLVII, 273.

<sup>12</sup> O.L., XL, 119.

<sup>15</sup> O.L., XLVIII, 617.

<sup>13</sup> O.L., XLIII, 292.

Before 1850 the name "high school" is found in a dozen more cases applied to private institutions chartered in the same way as contemporary academies and seminaries.

The growth of the use of the name "high school" can best be seen from the list given on page 456.

The list shows the growth in the use of the name "high school" but does not in any way represent the development of the public high school.

These schools were all of them privately controlled, usually by a board of from five to nine trustees, and were financed and established by the sale of stock at \$5.00 to \$25.00 per share, with a tuition charge to aid in meeting the expense of maintenance.

A quotation from the charter of the Springfield High School indicates the type of education contemplated by them.

said high school shall afford instruction to the youth of both sexes in the higher branches of an English education, or learned languages, or liberal arts and sciences, and such other branches of a polite and liberal education as may be prescribed by the trustees.<sup>1</sup>

The first legal warrant for a public school of a higher type than the ordinary common schools of the period is found in an act for the better classification of the schools of Cincinnati and Dayton, dated February 11, 1846.<sup>2</sup> This act authorizes the Trustees and Visitors of Common Schools to establish such other grades of schools as may to them appear necessary and expedient, and to have taught therein such other studies as they may from time to time prescribe. It is further provided that the efficiency and permanency of the common school system now existing shall never be impaired thereby. SECTION 2 of the same act gives the trustees power to contract with any institution for such purpose. The use of the Hughes Fund and the Woodward High School were probably contemplated.<sup>3</sup>

In October, 1845, it was first proposed by a Mr. Symmes that a central school should be established in Cincinnati for the instruction of the more advanced pupils of both sexes. This proposal was received favorably by the Trustees and Visitors of Common Schools

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<sup>1</sup>O.L., XXXII, 270.

<sup>2</sup>O.L., XLIV, 91.

<sup>3</sup>A bequest left by Thomas Hughes for the maintenance of a school or schools for destitute children.

as the following quotation from their annual report of June 30, 1846, shows:

The common branches of an English Education embracing Spelling, Definitions, Reading, Penmanship, Geography, drawing maps on the blackboard, Mental and Practical Arithmetic, English Grammar, United States History and Vocal Music are now efficiently taught in all the schools. Besides in most the Houses, the higher classes study a popular course of Natural Philosophy and Astronomy, and elementary courses of Algebra and Geometry. . . . We have supposed that the common school system of our City should provide such a course of instruction as would meet all the educational wants of a large proportion of the rising generation. This course must embrace more than is now taught in any of our schools; and if carried on, must either be attended to in each House separately, or in one building where all the higher classes from the different schools can be associated together.<sup>1</sup>

The report then argues for one school and says that it would be of great importance in the preparation of female teachers and would tend to elevate the standards of the elementary schools.

In the next annual report, 1847, in discussing the same topic the board says:

what is desirable . . . is the establishment of a Central School, to which the ambitious scholars from the senior class of every District might pass, where, up to a certain point congenial studies should occupy their minds.<sup>2</sup>

In November of the same year the central school was organized with H. H. Barney as the first principal. The report of the trustees for the following year, 1848, includes a report from the principal on the work of the school and gives this brief account of its organization:

The board on November 1st organized a central school, and with the approbation of the Council, a commodious building on Centre Street has been purchased.<sup>3</sup>

It proceeds to say that the "project is now in successful operation."

There was an enrolment of ninety-seven students during this first year, thirty-nine boys and fifty-eight girls. Pupils were admitted from ten to seventeen years of age, the ages thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen being most common.

The course of study was arranged on a four-year plan, with two terms in each year. The program outlined was comprehensive, including the following departments and studies.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Seventeenth Annual Report of the Trustees and Visitors of the Common Schools*, Cincinnati, 1846, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, *Eighteenth Annual Report*, 1847, p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, *Nineteenth Annual Report*, 1848, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

*Moral, Mental, and Political Science:*

- Constitution of the United States.
- Constitution and Public Institutions of Ohio.
- Moral Science.
- Mental Science.
- Political Economy.
- Science of Government.
- The Law of Nations.
- History of Civilization.

*Belles-Lettres and Composition:*

- English Grammar as the art of writing the English language with propriety. Composition.
- English Grammar, analytic and synthetic, and parsing by construction. Composition.
- Parsing by construction, analytic and synthetic, or decomposition and recombination of sentences. Composition.
- Rhetoric. Composition.
- Logic. Composition.
- History of Literature. Composition.
- Elements of Criticism. Composition.

*Modern, Ancient, and General History:*

- American History and Modern Geography.
- History of the United States with use of Globes.
- History of England.
- History of Rome and Ancient Geography.
- History of Greece and Ancient Geography.
- General History. Chronology.
- Philosophy of History.

*Ancient Languages:*

- Latin Exercises, Lessons and Latin Grammar.
- Latin Grammar, Exercises and Latin Reader.
- Caesar*, Latin Exercises.
- Cicero*, Greek Lessons.
- Virgil*, Greek Lessons and Greek Grammar.
- Sallust*, Greek Grammar and Reader.
- Horace*, Greek Reader and Xenophon.

*Mathematics:*

- Arithmetic, Mental and Written.
- Arithmetic, Elementary Algebra.
- Higher Algebra, Elementary Geometry.
- Higher Geometry, Trigonometry, Surveying, Navigation.
- Trigonometry and its applications, and Analytical Geometry.
- Analytical Geometry and Analytical Trigonometry.
- Engineering or Calculus.

*Sciences:*

- Natural Philosophy.
- Astronomy.

Chemistry.

Botany.

(A note says that classes in Anatomy, Physiology, and Natural History were not formed.)

*Penmanship*

*Drawing*

*Vocal Music*

*Bookkeeping*

*Etymology*

*Reading and Declamation*

There is a statement at the conclusion of the program of studies to the effect that Spanish, French, German, or Italian classes have not as yet been formed, but the course outlines work in French for two and a half years. The *Twentieth Annual Report*, published in June, 1849, says that French and German became the modern languages that were taught in 1849.

The ideal of those responsible for the Cincinnati high school is clearly shown in the following quotation from the *Twentieth Annual Report*:

To bestow upon them that intellectual, moral and physical culture, which would give to every young man a thorough English education preparatory to the pursuits of Agriculture, Commerce, Manufacture and the useful arts generally, or, if necessary for College, or any of the learned professions.<sup>1</sup>

The same legal provision that authorized the Board of Trustees of the Cincinnati schools "to establish such other grades of schools as may to them appear necessary" applied equally to Dayton. In 1848 principals of the schools petitioned the Dayton board for the privilege of teaching some of the higher branches to meet a want expressed by many of their more advanced scholars.<sup>2</sup> They stated that many of their better scholars are drawn away from the public to the private schools and that "we at present desire to introduce the elements of algebra and geometry, and perhaps physiology and natural philosophy." The board decided that it would not be wise to introduce this instruction into the district schools, but that it would be advisable to establish a high school.

Final action was not taken until 1850.<sup>3</sup> On April 4, 1850, the school board of Dayton adopted the following resolution: "That

<sup>1</sup> *Twentieth Annual Report of the Trustees and Visitors of the Common Schools*, Cincinnati, 1849, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> *Historical Sketches of the Public Schools in Cities, Villages, and Townships of the State of Ohio*. Robert W. Steele, "Historical Sketch of the Schools of Dayton," p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

this board do now establish the Central High School of Dayton, in which shall be taught the higher branches of an English education, and the German and French languages, beside thoroughly reviewing the studies pursued in the district schools." The school was opened on April 15 of the same year and in the fall of the year the free use of the local academy building was tendered and accepted for the use of the public high school.

Special legislation was passed February 18, 1848, authorizing the city of Cleveland to establish a central high school. SECTIONS 3 and 4 of this act are as follows:

SEC. 3. It shall be lawful for the City Council to establish a central high school and support the same at the expense of the City and they may at their discretion levy a special tax to purchase a lot and erect a building for that purpose, in which high school instruction may be given in the various branches of an English education usually taught in high schools.

SEC. 4. The City of Cleveland shall constitute one high school district, but for other purposes the district system now in force shall be preserved.<sup>1</sup>

As a matter of fact this legislation was passed to give legal warrant to what was already an accomplished fact.

Mayor Hoadly in the spring of 1846 had recommended the establishment of a school of higher grade. This was followed by a resolution from the committee on schools in the city council that a high school for boys be established. Basement rooms were rented in the Universalist Church on Prospect Street and the school opened July 13, 1846, with an enrolment of thirty-four boys and Andrew Freese as the first principal.<sup>2</sup> The number of boys enrolled increased to eighty-three during the year. Subjects taught were reading, spelling, arithmetic, writing, grammar, bookkeeping, algebra, geometry, natural philosophy, composition, and declamation.

The following year, 1847, a department for girls was opened with fourteen girls in attendance. The principal did not look upon this innovation with favor. In the register for 1847 he wrote, "14 girls were admitted this term. They do not come up to the standard and I doubt the policy of admitting girls at all into this Department."

<sup>1</sup> O.L., XLVI, 150.

<sup>2</sup> ANDREW FREESE, *Early History of Cleveland Public Schools*. Cleveland: Robison Savage & Co., 1876, pp. 33, 34.

By 1850 the program of studies had expanded to include English history, physiology, history of France, modern and ancient geography, history of Greece, history of Rome, science of government, political economy, geology, rhetoric, trigonometry, surveying, astronomy, botany, general history, elements of criticism, natural history and logic, in addition to the higher branches previously taught. The teaching of the common branches ceased at this time.<sup>1</sup> Foreign languages were not included until 1856.

The legislation of 1848 was secured by friends of the schools when opposition developed and the legality of conducting a school that taught subjects other than the common branches, supported by public funds, was questioned.

The history of the development of the high school in Columbus is quite similar. An amendment to the city's charter was secured February 16, 1849,<sup>2</sup> giving the board of education "power to establish schools of such grades as they may deem necessary for the public interest." Here again the establishment of the school had preceded the legislation and the law was secured to legalize the existing situation.

Asa D. Lord was employed as the first superintendent of the Columbus schools in May, 1847.<sup>3</sup> Three new school buildings were opened in July of the same year, the schools were classified, a course of instruction was adopted, and three departments were established called Primary, Secondary, and Grammar. These were all of elementary grade, but soon after the commencement of the second quarter when the entire time of the superintendent was less needed in the other rooms a vacant room was appropriated in the Middle district "for the instruction of the more advanced scholars, to which the Superintendent devoted one-half of each day, while a Female teacher was employed during the remainder."

The report of the board of education shows that they were influenced to take this action by the examples of the Philadelphia high school, the Boston high school, and the Woodward College of Cincinnati, and that they had learned that "more than 100 towns and cities had established such a department, not one had abandoned it after trying the experiment."

<sup>1</sup> WILLIAM J. AKERS, *Cleveland Schools in the Nineteenth Century*. Cleveland: W. M. Bayne, 1901, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> O.L., XLVII, 230.

<sup>3</sup> *Report of the Board of Education*, Columbus, 1851, p. 6.

The "experiment" met with similar success in Columbus. Before the close of the winter term, it had outgrown its quarters in the room "appropriated in the Middle district" and was moved into the Academy Building on Town Street which was rented by the board for that purpose. The enrolment the first year was 55 with an average attendance of 33. The second year, 1848, the enrolment was 112, which increased the next year to 150. The program of studies used was quite similar to the Cincinnati program except that no modern foreign languages were included. Reports show that the average age of the students was fourteen and one-half years.

The most significant feature of Ohio's educational development in the latter part of the decade 1840-50 is the organization of town and city systems of schools. The action taken by Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, and Dayton shows a growing conviction that the public system of education should include schools of a higher grade than the elementary or district schools, in which older and more advanced pupils could obtain free of charge an education equal to that given in the best private schools.

A number of other towns and cities obtained legal warrant for such schools during this period. February 8, 1847, legislation was passed for the support and better regulation of common schools in School District No. 21 in Urbana, "providing for the election of a Board of Education, the establishment of primary schools, and a central high school in which instruction shall be given in the various branches usually taught in academies."<sup>1</sup> Free admission was to be given to each scholar and to all residents in the district and to such other persons as may own property subject to school tax, "Provided that all pupils must sustain the customary examinations."

Similar legislation was obtained for Lithopolis, February 18, 1848, directing the board to "establish one high school in which shall be given the branches usually taught in academies, and it shall be the duty of the Board to establish such other schools as they may deem proper."<sup>2</sup>

Not all towns looked with equal favor upon this new extension of public education. In the act passed February 19, 1848, for the

<sup>1</sup>O.L., XLV, 121.

<sup>2</sup>O.L., XLVI, 185.

support and regulation of the common schools of Lancaster it is specifically provided that the board of education is "not authorized to establish schools for instruction in any branches other than those pertaining to an English education."<sup>1</sup>

The example of other towns, however, was too strong to be resisted and in spite of this legislation the Lancaster high school was established April 1, 1849, in which algebra, geometry, natural philosophy, history, chemistry, and Latin were taught.<sup>2</sup>

Apparently tuition was charged in this school, for the original act was amended February 13, 1850, allowing all branches of learning to be taught at the discretion of the directors, "provided no part of the Common School Fund shall be appropriated for instruction in branches other than those pertaining to a good English education."<sup>3</sup>

The Lebanon District in Warren County, February 24, 1848,<sup>4</sup> secured an act for the support and better regulation of common schools. SECTION 5 of this act requires the establishment of primary schools and a central high school "wherein instruction shall be given in the rudiments and fundamental branches of an English education not taught in the primary school, and also a central high school in which instruction shall be given in the various branches usually taught in academies." Gratuitous admission was to be given to students in the district to each school.

This legislation seems to contemplate something similar to our modern junior and senior high schools, but apparently the enthusiasm of those who obtained the legislation outran the action of the board. The high school was not established until five years later, when on June 21, 1853,<sup>5</sup> it was authorized by vote of the board. There is nothing to show that more than one school was established or that it differed in any way from other schools of the time.

With one notable exception the towns given above were the only ones that secured legislation prior to 1850 legalizing schools of a higher grade than the ordinary district schools of the period. The exception is Akron. In the legislation finally adopted for that

<sup>1</sup> O.L., XLVI, 199.

<sup>2</sup> *Historical Sketches of the Public Schools in Cities, Villages, and Townships of the State of Ohio*, "History of the Public Schools of Lancaster, Ohio," p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> O.L., XLVIII, 647.

<sup>4</sup> O.L., XLVI, 237.

<sup>5</sup> *History of Warren County*. Chicago: W. H. Beers & Co., 1882, p. 478.

city a model was established for the organization of graded schools in towns and cities and with but few changes the "Akron law" became a general law, the provisions of which could be adopted by any municipality of 200 or more inhabitants. The term "high school" does not occur in the original Akron Act, nor in its later modifications, but as it provided for the establishment of a grade system and allowed the school boards to incorporate in the system schools of a higher grade than the common schools and to have taught in them such higher subjects as they desired, it did in effect give legal warrant for high schools in those towns that chose to adopt its provisions.

At a public meeting held in Akron on May 16, 1846, a committee was appointed "to take into consideration our present educational provisions and the improvement, if any, which may be made therein."<sup>1</sup> The committee's report was, in part, as follows:

- I. Let the whole village be incorporated into one school district.
- II. Let there be established six primary schools in different parts of the village so as best to accommodate the whole.
- III. Let there be one Grammar School centrally located where instruction may be given in the various studies and parts of studies not provided for in the Primary Schools and yet requisite to a respectable English education.

The main features of the report indicated in SECTIONS 1, 2, and 3, as given above were enacted into law on February 8, 1847.

In the present study we are especially concerned with the type of school organized by the board of education in accord with the provisions outlined in SECTION 3 of the committee's report. The centralized school contemplated by the report is called a grammar school, and the board proceeded at once to provide for it by remodeling a dwelling-house for its occupancy. The first term of this school commenced in August, 1847, with an enrolment of 127 students.<sup>2</sup>

The following subjects were included in the program of studies offered: orthography, reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, history, grammar, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, physiology, natural philosophy, mental philosophy, chemistry, bookkeeping, astronomy, and phonography, with one hour each week given to

<sup>1</sup> *Historical Sketches of the Public Schools in Cities, Villages, and Townships of the State of Ohio*. Judge C. Bryan, "Historical Sketch of the Akron Public Schools," p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4, 5.

composition and declamation. It will be seen that a comprehensive list of subjects was considered necessary to afford opportunity to the young people of Akron to acquire "a respectable English education." The program was in reality a high-school program. The one conspicuous omission in the list of studies is that of foreign languages.

By this time there were many towns in Ohio that were awakening to the need of better school opportunities and particularly to the possibilities of a graded school system. Any town desiring to do so was given the opportunity to establish such a system without obtaining a special charter by a law passed February 14, 1848,<sup>1</sup> which extended the provisions of the Akron Act to any incorporated town, city, or borough on petition of two-thirds of the voters. One year later, February 21, 1849,<sup>2</sup> a general law was passed for cities and towns that could be adopted by a majority vote.

If it was adopted the municipality became a single school district and it became the duty of the school board to "establish an adequate number of primary schools" and

a suitable number of other schools of a higher grade or grades, wherein instruction shall be given in such studies as may not be provided for in the primary schools . . . and it shall be the further duty of said board to decide what branches shall be taught in each of said schools, provided that no other languages than the English or German shall be taught therein, except with the concurrence of two-thirds of the board.

The term "high school" does not occur in the law but the only limitation placed upon the board in the higher studies that may be taught is that concerning foreign languages and with a two-thirds majority the school board could set aside this limitation.

While there is no compulsory feature in the law, a way was pointed out to the towns of the state that made it possible for them to obtain a graded system of schools without the formalities needed in securing a special charter, and also to establish a high school (unnamed and undefined in the law) as a part of the graded system.

The usual organization of the public schools of Ohio in both city and country communities had been of the ungraded district-school type, except in those cases where a special charter had been granted as in the case of Cincinnati and some of the other larger cities of

<sup>1</sup>O.L., XLVI, 48.

<sup>2</sup>O.L., XLVII, 22.

the state. The Akron law and the general law that was modeled on it, made it possible for urban communities to unite their separate districts into a union district and organize a union school with a graded course of study. The schools so organized are usually referred to in contemporary educational literature as "union schools" and a high school for the more advanced pupils was ordinarily incorporated as a part of the system.

A statement of the usual practice may be seen in the following quotation from the *Ohio School Journal* published in April, 1849. The author in discussing union schools says:

One thoroughly qualified male teacher is employed as principal of the highest department and Superintendent of the whole school, and the lower departments are instructed mainly by female teachers. The scholars are divided according to their advancement, into three or more departments, known as the primary, secondary, and senior or grammar school departments in each of which a systematic course of study and a thorough course in all the common English Branches is pursued; and to these is added, when practicable, a high school, in which the higher English Branches, mathematics and the languages are taught.<sup>1</sup>

The schools below the high school were ordinarily divided into eight or nine grades and the high school was from the first, in the better organized schools, a four-year course, although three- and five-year courses were also found.<sup>2</sup> The Cincinnati<sup>3</sup> and Columbus schools which were recognized and copied as leaders in school grading and in the establishment of high schools, each had nine grades below the high school and a four-year course in the high school itself.<sup>4</sup> Pupils were allowed, however, to enter the first grade at the age of four, and the high school at the age of ten in Cincinnati, and at the age of twelve in Columbus, if they showed themselves on examination to be qualified for the instruction given.

<sup>1</sup> *Ohio School Journal*, April 1849, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> *Historical Sketches of the Public Schools in Cities, Villages, and Townships of the State of Ohio*. "History of Barnesville Public Schools"; "History of the Circleville Public Schools."

<sup>3</sup> *Twentieth Annual Report of the Trustees and Visitors of the Common Schools*, Cincinnati, 1849, p. 48.

<sup>4</sup> The four-year course in the high school may have been copied from contemporary practice in academies and seminaries. These were often organized with four-year courses though three- and five-year plans also appear. Sometimes the academy announcements simply list the studies offered and give no indication of any definite length of time required to complete the course of study.

The *Nineteenth Annual Report of the Cincinnati Board of Education* gives a hint concerning the models followed in organizing its course when it says: "The course of study in the central school will be similar to that adopted in other institutions of like character." Probably the high schools of Boston, Philadelphia, Hartford, etc., are referred to here.

Superintendent Asa D. Lord, of Columbus, received so many inquiries concerning the grading of the Columbus schools that he replied in an open letter in the December number of the *Ohio School Journal*, 1849, "to obviate the necessity of answering letters," as follows:

The Public Schools are divided into Primary, Secondary and Grammar Schools and one High School. . . . The time ordinarily required to complete this course will be three years in each of the first three grades, and four years in the high school. . . . The period spent will depend upon the diligence and improvement of the scholar rather than his age or the time spent in a particular school. Generally speaking the Primary schools are intended for children from four to seven years of age; the Grammar Schools for those over ten years, and the high school for those over twelve years who wish to commence the study of some higher branches, and who are qualified to enter upon the course of study prescribed in the school. . . . For admission to High School scholars should be twelve years old, and must be able to spell, read and write well, and to sustain a satisfactory examination in English grammar, geography, and history, in mental and written arithmetic."<sup>1</sup>

The example of Columbus, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Akron, and other towns which had graded their schools and established high schools popularized the idea of union schools in the other progressive communities of the state. In the July number of the *Ohio School Journal*, 1849, the following quotation from the *Free School Clarion*, of Massillon, Ohio, appears:

Before many moons shall wax and wane, there will be at least forty Union Schools in Ohio, and each of these will require a man of talent and energy.<sup>2</sup>

A summary of Ohio's beginnings in the matter of high school development prior to 1850 will show the following significant features: The name "high school" is first given legal warrant in the charter of The High School of Elyria in 1830. Following this, approximately a dozen other privately established institutions adopt the name "high school."

The first legal provision that made possible the establishment of a high school as a part of the public-school system occurs in the school legislation for Cincinnati and Dayton, dated February 11, 1846. The first high school organized under the authorization of this law was the Central High School in Cincinnati which opened in November, 1847.

<sup>1</sup> *Ohio School Journal*, December, 1849, p. 182.

<sup>2</sup> *Ohio School Journal*, July, 1849, p. 98.

Special legislation was not enacted until February, 1848, authorizing a high school for Cleveland, but the educational sentiment of the community had outstripped the legal machinery and the Central High School of Cleveland had been opened on July 13, 1846. Columbus secured a legal warrant for schools of "higher grade" February 15, 1849. Here again the school was established before the friends of education had secured an amendment to the charter and had been opened to advanced pupils since the autumn of 1847.

Cleveland seems to have been the first town in Ohio to have opened a high school as a part of the public-school system with Columbus, Cincinnati, and Akron as close seconds. Five other towns beside Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati, and Akron secured special legislation authorizing the establishment of high schools prior to 1850.

The Akron grammar school opened in August, 1847. In 1848 the provisions of the Akron law were made applicable to other municipalities and in 1849 a general law was passed modeled on the Akron law that made it possible for any town in Ohio to establish a central school of higher grade than the elementary schools if the majority of the voters cast their ballots for a graded school system.

In every case in the development of these early high schools in Ohio it is to be noted that the school grows out of the public-school system and is quite independent of the contemporary academies. In a number of cases the school came first and the necessary legislation followed within a year or two after the establishment of the schools. Sometimes, as in Cincinnati, the older and more advanced pupils were originally taught in special classes in the ward or district schools. This upward extension of the common schools led to the idea of a central school of higher grade. This idea, acted upon first by individual cities and legalized by special legislation became popularized by the Akron Act and by 1850 the movement for graded town schools with a high school at the head of the system was fairly launched in Ohio.